

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A lead fixation tool comprising:
 - a proximal portion having a tapered passage therethrough, with the tapered passage narrowing in a direction towards the distal portion; and
 - a distal portion having a channel in substantially axial alignment with the passage, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion are rotatably coupled so that relative rotation is permitted between the proximal portion and the distal portion without requiring lateral movement between the proximal portion and the distal portion; and
 - an expandable lead pin engagement mechanism disposed within the channel.
2. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 1, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion form an integral housing.
3. (Cancelled).
4. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 3, further comprising a bearing, wherein the bearing couples the distal portion and the proximal portion.
5. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 4, further comprising a rotation indicator.
6. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 5, wherein the rotation indicator includes:
 - a resilient arm having an actuator; and
 - a detent, wherein rotation of the distal portion relative to the proximal portion causes the actuator to engage the detent and provide a signal.
7. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 6, wherein the signal is audible.

8. (Previously presented) The lead fixation tool of claim 6, wherein the signal is a tactile sensation.

9. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 1, further comprising a handle depending from the distal portion.

10. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 1, wherein the lead pin engagement mechanism further includes an interference clamp.

11. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 10, wherein the interference clamp is axially aligned with the passage.

12. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 11, wherein the interference clamp is C-shaped.

13. (Currently Amended) A lead fixation tool comprising:

a channel within a distal ~~end~~ portion of the tool;
a proximal portion, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion are rotatably coupled so that relative rotation is permitted between the proximal portion and the distal portion without requiring lateral movement between the proximal portion and the distal portion; and
means for gripping a lead disposed within said channel and having an expandable engagement mechanism; and

means for aligning the lead with a tapered passageway that tapers from a larger opening in a proximal end of the tool to a smaller opening in a direction towards said distal end of the tool wherein the distal end is configured to receive a proximal end of the lead.

14. (Currently Amended) A tool comprising:

a channel within a distal ~~end~~ portion of the tool;

a proximal portion, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion are rotatably coupled so that relative rotation is permitted between the proximal portion and the distal portion without requiring lateral movement between the proximal portion and the distal portion; and

means for receiving a stylet that includes a tapered passageway that narrows from a proximal opening in the tool towards said distal end of the tool;

means for receiving a lead distal to and aligned with the means for receiving the stylet; and

means for gripping a lead disposed within said channel and having an expandable engagement mechanism;

15. (Original) The tool of claim 14, further comprising:
means for indicating a rotation of the tool.

16. (Original) The tool of claim 15, wherein the means for indicating rotation indicate rotation of a first portion of the tool relative to a second portion of the tool.

17. (Currently Amended) A lead fixation tool comprising:

a proximal portion having a guide passage disposed therethrough, wherein the guide passage includes a tapered portion having an opening and a lumen interface, with the tapered portion narrowing in a direction from the opening to the lumen interface; and

a distal portion having a connector channel that is axially aligned with the guide passage, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion are rotatably coupled so that relative rotation is permitted between the proximal portion and the distal portion without requiring lateral movement between the proximal portion and the distal portion;

an expandable engagement collar disposed within the connector channel that is configured for gripping and axially aligned with the guide passage.

18. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 17, further comprising a handle depending from the distal portion.
19. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 17, further comprising a gripping surface disposed on the proximal portion.
20. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 17, wherein the engagement collar is a resilient C-shaped clamp.
21. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 17, wherein the proximal portion is rotatably coupled with the distal portion.
22. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 21, wherein the engagement collar is coupled with the proximal portion.
23. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 17, further comprising a rotation indicator.
24. (Original) The fixation tool of claim 23, wherein the rotation indicator includes:
a resilient arm having an actuator; and
a detent, wherein rotation of the distal portion relative to the proximal portion causes the actuator to engage the detent and provide a signal.
25. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 24, wherein the signal is audible.
26. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 24, here the signal is a tactile sensation.
27. (Currently Amended) A lead fixation tool comprising:

a housing having a generally circular cross section, the housing including a proximal portion and a distal portion, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion are axially aligned, wherein the proximal portion and the distal portion are rotatably coupled so that relative rotation is permitted between the proximal portion and the distal portion without requiring lateral movement between the proximal portion and the distal portion;

a guide passage for receiving stylet and extending between an opening in the proximal portion to a lumen interface, wherein the guide passage tapers from a larger diameter at the opening to a narrower diameter distal from the opening;

a lead receiving channel disposed within the distal end for receiving at least a portion of a connector assembly of a lead;

an expandable connector pin channel disposed within the lead receiving channel for receiving a connector pin of the connector assembly and axially aligning the connector pin with the lumen interface; and

an engagement collar defining the connector pin channel and configured to grip the connector pin.

28. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 27, further comprising a handle depending from the distal portion in a plane that is perpendicular to an axis of rotation of the tool.

29. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 27, further comprising a gripping surface disposed over at least a portion of an exterior of the proximal portion.

30. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 29, wherein the gripping surface includes a plurality of ridges.

31. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 27, further comprising a directional indicator for indicating a direction of rotation to affect lead implantation.

32. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 27, wherein the proximal portion is rotatable relative to the distal portion.
33. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 32, further comprising a bearing forming an interconnection between the proximal portion and the distal portion.
34. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 32, further comprising a rotational indicator.
35. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 34, wherein the rotational indicator includes:
- a resilient arm having an actuator; and
 - a detent, wherein rotation of the distal portion relative to the proximal portion causes the actuator to engage the detent and provide a signal.
36. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 35, wherein the resilient arm is coupled with the proximal portion and the detent is formed in the distal portion.
37. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 36, further comprising a window disposed on the distal portion that permits visual observance of the actuator engaging the detent.
38. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 35, wherein the signal is audible.
39. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 35, wherein the signal is a tactile sensation.
40. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 27, wherein the guide passage is configured to receive a portion of a handle of the stylet.

41. (Original) The lead fixation tool of claim 27, wherein the housing is aligned parallel to the connector pin during rotation of the tool.

42. – 44. (Cancelled)